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THE ISLAND
OF ELCADAR



By ICARUS DE PLUME

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Fiction (American)

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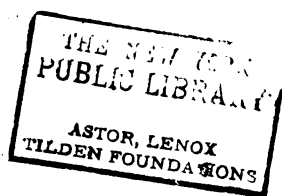
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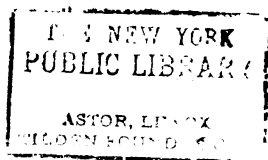
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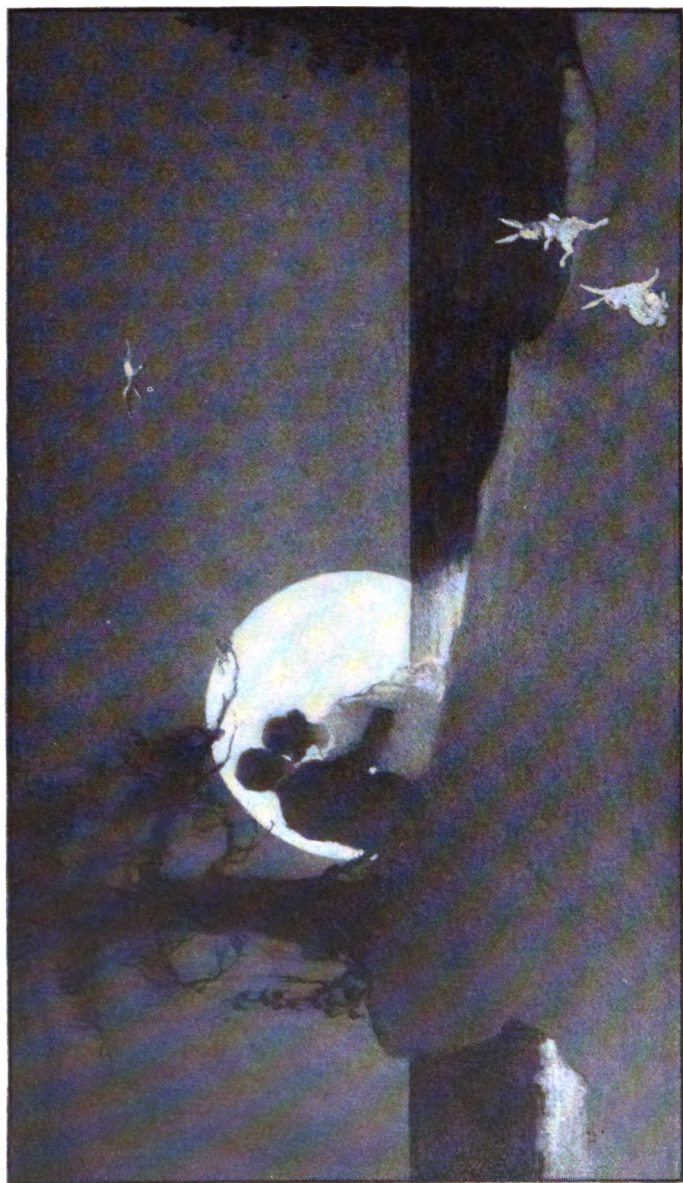
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The moon rose large and luminous out of the sea
(See page 42)

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

A PILGRIMAGE IN NOVEL-LAND

By ICARUS DE PLUME

With Introductory Note by

FITZHUGH MONTMORENCY

Ph.D., D.Sc., LL.D., Litt.D., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., M.R.A.S.

Romantic Professor of Psychology
of the Siberian College of Umsk in
the District of Ural

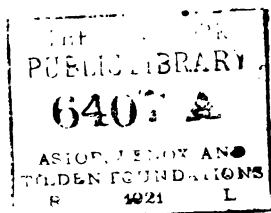


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JAN
1921

Lovingly Dedicated
to one
who does not like
this Little Book
and whom
I have enjoyed teasing
during my illness
by writing it

PUT FEB 14 1921

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I HAVE enjoyed writing this little book because of its absurdity. If I took it seriously I should feel ashamed. I almost always feel ashamed when I take anything seriously. This book and life itself are like other flirtations; if you take them too seriously, you generally feel ashamed in the end. Most people are ashamed of their enthusiasms.

So, beware. If you find any food for thought you do so at your own risk.

I have tried throughout "to shun the frumious bandersnatch," but I have failed. Professor Mont-Morency, however, disagrees with me, and insists on writing a serious criticism.

There is only one chapter that can possibly justify the Professor in his charge of seriousness. That is the chapter, "Stardust." Here I have a confession to make. I, too, have been starstruck. It is much worse than being moonstruck. It is more rarefied. Possibly therefore something serious may have crept into that chapter without my being conscious of it.

Farther than this I do not care to go.

ICARUS DE PLUME

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY a fortunate coincidence I learned that Icarus de Plume originally intended to publish his last work as a penny dreadful or dime novel, and that he changed his plans merely on account of the high cost of living. This revealed to me the fact that the author held his work too cheap, and did not himself realize the valuable psychological data relating to romance that he had furnished the world. I give my own impressions to his publishers in the interest of science.

There are six important concepts in his work which should be considered:

- I. Romance as a Source of Inspiration and Energy.
- II. Silence the Communicating Medium, in its Relation to the Earth-Noise.
- III. The Moral Status of the Poet.
- IV. The Magnetic Attraction of Mystery.
- V. The Effect of Climate on the Temperamental Characteristics of Woman.
- VI. The Value of a Sense of Humor.

These general concepts are, of course, familiar to the advanced students of the psychology of romance,

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

but they may need elucidation somewhat for the average reader, and their adroit application by the author will enlighten, in my judgment, even the most advanced students.

ROMANCE AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND ENERGY

As to romance, it is unnecessary to point out any one incident in the book. The whole work bears testimony to the fundamental fact that romance is the keynote of endeavor. There is a popular belief that the business man is convinced that dollars guide entirely the destiny of the worker. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Unless the worker has his own particular dream his interest wanes. Romance is merely the thought of what lies just over the hill, it is the keynote of all accomplishment. It does not make any difference whether the hill happens to be a roll-top desk or an island off the coast of Virginia. This, of course, is fundamental.

SILENCE THE COMMUNICATING MEDIUM, IN ITS RELATION TO THE EARTH-NOISE

The theory that we might hear the music of the spheres except for the din of the world is accurately developed in Chapters II and XIII. The music that comes into Harold's consciousness as he sits at land's-end is a splendid illustration. There is no question but that messages from the Gods come at such moments

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and that the art of receiving such messages is merely the art of eliminating what the author calls the "Earth-Noise."

You will note that as Harold and Guinevere "trudged in silence" on that lone promontory stretching out into the sea "the world of every-day affairs glided silently back and left them." This was psychical as well as physical. Harold first dimmed the earth-noise by the influence of distance and new environment, accompanied by the appropriate murmur of waves. Then, with exquisite art, he chose the medium of silence through and by which the voices of nature, which are the voices of the Gods, become known to us.

You will note, "He knew that silence is our only means of communicating anything really important." In other words, he understood the quality of silence. As Einstein has so ably shown us, both time and space are relative. So is silence. One does not know whether silence is the absence of noise or noise the absence of silence. One does not know whether it is positive or negative. Harold, however, knew of its power as a medium of communication, and his method teaches the student of romance a great deal. By silence alone can one perceive the otherwise imperceptible voices of the Gods and departed poets. You must inhibit the din of the world before you can perceive celestial voices. It is only through the ether of silence that such delicate messages can be transmitted.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE MORAL STATUS OF THE POET

The moral status of the poet is really a puzzle to the Anglo-Saxon race. Shernard Boer aptly points out to Celestine: "According to our modern morals a poet is generally a very wicked person because he has the capacity of being sincerely in love with more than one person at the same time." He really hits upon a vital fact. The poet can be and really is often sincerely in love with more than one person. This distinguishes him from the usual man of the world. For example, if a poet, falling temporarily in love, indites a beautiful poem to his lady's eyelid, the world is prone to worship and applaud, while the usual man of the world, in like circumstance, but without the poem, is quite certain to be condemned.

The fact is, the sincerity of the poet's emotion in temporary instances sanctifies his attractions. You will note the author's profound utterance: "Happy healthy married people have lost the ferment of unrest that stirs the poet to sing and the artist to put his soul on canvas. The divine unrest so greatly idealized by the world is but tintured with its sins after all."

But you will say: "This is contrary to the rules of civilization." So it is, and so it should be. Poets are not civilized. We love them because the rivers of their fancy do not glide smoothly through scientifically constructed canals, but wind and turn in sweet wonder through the capricious hills and valleys of nature. Mathematically speaking, the poet is to the usual man

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

as the pigeon is to the wild dove, or the barnyard hen is to the sleek pheasant of the fields. The pigeon and the hen are good food, but they do not stimulate our imagination or inspire us with any particular sense of beauty.

We are indebted to Shernard Boer for so clearly revealing to us the fact that we really love the poet because he is unconventional or uncivilized, and to the author also for teaching us that we love the poet so much we *beguile* ourselves into *pretending* he wears a halo.

THE MAGNETIC ATTRACTION OF MYSTERY

The lay mind may find it difficult to understand why Celestine should have been drawn toward such a character as Shernard Boer. This is a splendid illustration of the magnetism of mystery. She did not understand him, though, as you may have noted, she understood men pretty well from sea captains to macaroon hunters. There is an old French saying to the effect that: "To understand all is to pardon all." Woman in her regard for man is the famous exception to this rule. With her, to understand all is to be bored.

One often hears the colloquial expression: "What she does not know will not hurt her." As a matter of fact, what she does not know often benefits and attracts a woman more than any knowledge ever could. The attraction is akin to the thought of what lies just over the hill. It is the charm of the Christmas legend. When we really know Santa Claus does not come down the

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

chimney we seek new legends. If we see and know what lies just over the hill it is no longer over the hill. Our romance has been wounded.

THE EFFECT OF CLIMATE ON THE TEMPERAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMAN

Little Sal is typical of the effect of climate on temperament. She came from Wyoming, and women of the Utah, Nevada and Wyoming desert countries are really part of their soil. They love their native land as much as the Californian, though, *perhaps*, they mention it a little less. They are like the summer seed and grain of those lands storing up in a hardened exterior a wonderful force that will blossom forth under the proper influence from heaven.

You will note that Little Sal "had ridden so much and was so hardened with Western life you practically had to kill her to get her to yield in the slightest to any masculine influence." Then, again, "where she would have shot him if he had taken such a liberty with her before, she would have shot him now if he had transferred that liberty to anyone else." A flirtation to them is as a mere mist to the soil. It has no appreciable effect. There has to be a thunderstorm of emotion or a deluge for the blossoms of the desert countries to show any signs of outbourgeoning.

The Little Sals of novel-land are wont to unfold their personality, or, in other words, fall in love, only while recuperating from some serious adventure. They are

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generally caught in storms, thrown from horses, or captured by bandits. Their susceptibility is measured by the quality of their convalescence. To the Little Sals of the world the æsthetic value of the next concept is as mere mist to the soil.

THE VALUE OF A SENSE OF HUMOR

An eminent German writer, a woman, if you will, has sententiously observed that the moment you take a flirtation seriously you become a pall-bearer at its funeral. The author brings this out neatly in his preface. The psychological fact is that flirtation is so involved with a sense of humor that unless you can laugh at the proper moment you become serio-comic. Human nature is so complex that one literally has to laugh on occasion. It is the intuitive power to know when to laugh that is the asset of the successful.

There are many ideas in life with which we simply have to flirt to maintain our sanity. For example, such ideas as the idea so long taught in religious literature, that we are born in sin, that virgin and priest are somehow purer than the parents of wonderful children; the idea that the body contaminates, instead of being the tabernacle of the soul, to be kept clean and beautiful; and the idea that our forefathers, because they were *civilized*, and had been taught *not* to covet their neighbor's property, had the right to take away the land from the Indians, who had been denied the privilege of such ethical training.

PREFATORY NOTE

It is necessary to flirt with such ideas. We must approach them with a very light touch. At any rate, such an approach makes life pleasanter, and, in closing, I recommend it to the reader in considering the philosophy of "The Island of Elcadar."

FITZHUGH MONTMORENCY

Ph.D., D.Sc., LL.D., Litt.D., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., M.R.A.S.

Publisher's Note: FitzHugh MontMorency, though an Englishman born and a graduate of Oxford, was the son of Princess Petunia Lavodka Vladivodinsky, Lady-in-Waiting to the late Dowager Empress of Russia. He was able to pronounce his mother's name correctly at the age of five, and later acquired such a mastery of the Russian language he was given a chair in the Siberian College of Umsk.

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THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

THE CAST

A*S all the world goes to the movies nowadays, I have inserted this little cast. Someone may find pleasure in imagining that this is the scenario of a movie. And I believe in trying to please.*

HAROLD FANSITARTS, *the hero.*

GUINEVERE GOLDBLOCKS, *the heroine.*

GARIBALDI GOLDBLOCKS, *a phenomenal financier and the heroine's father.*

MRS. GOLDBLOCKS.

HYACINTH HENRY, *the scion of a proud family.*

VARICK VARIMADILDO, *a chemical villain, and very modern.*

DIETRICH DELATOUR, *a desultory detective.*

HANK HAWKINS, *Captain of the Gyrfalcon.*

THE GYRFALCON, *Harold Fansitarts' yacht.*

CELESTINE, *a French maid, saucy and surreptitious.*

ALKALI IKE, *the author's sudden friend.*

MAMMY, *the waffle queen of Elcadar.*

CHESTER CHESTLEWICK, *an adventurer amid powder puffs.*

TWEEKENHAM TWIDDLEDALE, *a faultless gentleman with the accent on the gentle.*

MARGARET MERTON, *the blameless heroine of an affair that did not look nice.*

MRS. TWEEKENHAM TWIDDLEDALE, *the same.*

THE CAST

LADY PENNYWAIT PINFEATHERS, *owner of a Pomeranian with hiccoughs.*

GERRY GOODFELLOW, *among those present.*

Scene: New York City and the Island of Elcadar,
off the coast of Virginia.

Properties: A rare Italian brocade, a Chinese drug,
pajamas, moonlight, kisses, firearms and
a blimp. Also a screen and a detective.

SUPPLEMENTARY CAST

SOME of my literary friends have told me that this does not properly belong here. It is such fun, however, to be improper once in a while that I have inserted it.

You see, I am deeply indebted to these later characters, for they have helped me fashion the destinies of the more difficult persons in the first cast. They deserve special mention.

Allow me to introduce you to

APANTHA PRIMROSE, a poetess of empurpled vision.

SHERNARD BOER, a cynic with a sense of humor.

OLD BUCK STICKLEBACK, a Wyoming rancher with a lightning trigger finger.

LITTLE SAL, his daughter, the Pride of Hunger Gulch Gap.

SNAKE DAWSON, a bad man from the Porcupine River country.

SLIME DULAP, a bandit from Skunk Hollow.

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

A Pilgrimage in Novel-Land

Chapter I

THE START

HAROLD FANSITARTS, the famous Harvard half-back, stood on the deck of his yacht Gyrfalcons as it passed slowly down New York Harbor beyond the Statue of Liberty. There was a smile on his handsome face as he gazed toward the summer sun that was sinking slowly in the haze that hung over the Jersey shore.

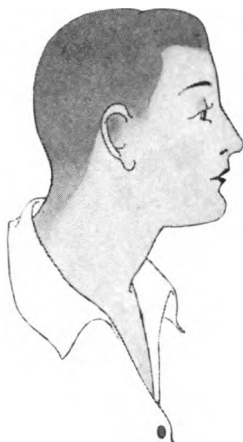
It was the smile of youth and success, not fatuous nor sardonic, but fresh and full-blooded. It was a smile with a reason.

Only three years before, he had graduated from college. In the meantime he had maneuvered old Garibaldi Goldilocks, the most powerful financier in New York, out of one million dollars net after taking care of all Federal taxes. In itself this was an accomplishment; but it was not all. Halfback Harold had also won the affection of Goldilocks' only daughter, Guinevere, and he had done so in the face of great opposition. For Guinevere Goldilocks, at her father's inexorable command, had just become engaged to Hyacinth Henry, a limp and pallid young man with a watery eye, whom Harold's Yankee captain had described pretty well as "a tender saplin' that 'ad stood so long o' the nor' side o' the hill his sap was froze." But Hyacinth was the scion of a well-known family,

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and was said to be worth a hundred million dollars. Such is the irony of social environment in these latter days.

The beautiful Guinevere was now sleeping an azure-lidded sleep in the palatial stateroom of the Gyrfalcon.



Harold Fansitarts

Her arms drawn back over her head, her eyelashes still untangled, she presented a vision of adolescent delight as she reclined on a rare Italian brocade that had been tossed in a nonchalant manner over Harold's couch.

The ship's clock struck four bells just as they passed Sea Gate at the mouth of the harbor. Guinevere awoke and slowly stretched herself. Her tall willowy figure unfolded with a sleek and easy grace.

THE START

She arose and sauntered out on deck. The summer wind swept gently across the bow, and tossed her fair hair with fitful abandon. The deep glow of the afternoon sun glorified her with its radiance.

Swaying with the gentle rhythmic motion of the ship she was a picture for artist or poet, and Harold was entranced. Guinevere watched him also with admiring eyes as he guided the Gyr Falcon out toward the open sea. Little did she guess that Harold, bold as he was, had planned to carry her away against her will. Yet this was the fact. Bored by the usual method of wooing the daughters of the well-to-do, this unusual youth had decided on a different plan.

The Gyr Falcon was already heading for the cedared Island of Elcadar where years ago he had spent many happy boyhood hours. The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts, and Elcadar was the islet of his dreams. It was a refuge of pine woods and cedar, of sandy shores and balmy breezes. It was sought by the sea birds as their haven of rest, and at twilight on its shores the ocean crooned strange and ancient legends.

In fleeting revery Harold saw his island once again, and was startled when he heard Guinevere saying: "Harold, when do we turn back? It's getting late, and you know I have to dine with Hyacinth at eight-thirty and go to the Cat and Poultry Show at Madison Square Garden. There are some wonderful Liberian lap cats there that Hyacinth is very much interested in."

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At the mention of Hyacinth's name a shadow passed over Harold's face. For a moment he stood silent. Then he said quietly:

"Guinevere, we are not going back this evening. You are my prisoner for a while, but you have nothing to fear. Your father thinks you have gone on a week's motor trip with your Aunt Sophronia. Everything will be all right if you just accept what fate provides."

Guinevere was stunned. She knew Harold was the bold, dashing type, but she did not believe *he* would do such a thing as to carry her off without her consent; and yet, in her heart of hearts, she admired his resolute character and secretly congratulated herself on the fact that she at least had a good excuse for not going to the Cat Show with Hyacinth.

But she must not let Harold know. She must dissemble. She looked at him defiantly and a deep flush of anger suffused her face.

"Harold," she said, "what do you mean? Turn back, or I may prefer the sea to your company," and she leaned far out over the rail, watching him carefully.

It was Harold's turn to be surprised. For the first time he had seen Guinevere completely roused. Her anger made him thoughtful, so he said in a firm, quiet voice:

"It was because of Hyacinth I brought you here. I could not bear to leave you with him. I know your father's power. If Hyacinth had presented you with

THE START

one of those rare Liberian lap cats I should have died of jealousy.”

There was a note of repentance as he uttered the last few words. His manner was serious. Guinevere felt her eyes filling with tears. She must not reveal any loss of self-possession, so she turned discreetly away and went into the cabin. There she resigned herself to the situation. She threw herself on the couch, half angry, yet half enjoying in pensive mood the whole adventure. She knew Harold was honorable as far as she was concerned, and so she made up her mind to do as he had said, and to accept what fate in the shape of a rather bold young man had provided. She could plan her escape later.

Meanwhile the Gyrfalcon was making twenty knots an hour southward toward Virginia's sandy shores and the Island of Elcadar.

At seven-thirty that evening a neat-looking steward brought her dinner on a tray, but Harold did not appear. At ten o'clock, however, he knocked, putting his head in the after hatchway, and holding out a bunch of keys.

“Guinevere,” he said, and his voice was subdued and wistful, “these are the keys of your stateroom. You can lock the doors and be free from interference. Do not be alarmed. Celestine is on board. It was she who packed your traveling case, which you will find below. Your father thinks that she left with you and your Aunt Sophronia on the motor trip. You can

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

call her at any time by ringing the bell at the left of the locker."

Without waiting for a reply he vanished, and Guinevere found herself alone, too dazed to think. She listened absent-mindedly to the throb, throb of the engines; and the Cat Show in New York seemed millions of miles away.

That night, however, Guinevere slept better than she had for many months. The portholes were thrown open and the sea air was a tonic to her nerves. She awoke with the sun pouring into the cabin. She was angry with herself, however, for sleeping so well and being so refreshed, for she knew she ought to have been restless and frightened. She arose, slipped on her silk wrapper, and gazed long and earnestly into the mirror as she dressed her hair.

At eight o'clock she pressed the bell at the left of the locker. There was a knock at the hatchway door. She unlocked it, and to her surprise there stood Celestine, wreathed in smiles and carrying a tray with a delicious-looking hot breakfast on it.

"Celestine, how can you smile and look so cheerful?" Guinevere said, as soon as her maid had put down the breakfast tray. "How can you sympathize with such wickedness?"

Celestine raised her dark brown eyes to her mistress with a look of questioning.

"Madame, I do not understand. Monsieur Harold told me your father was letting him take you by boat

THE START

to see your Uncle Percival, on the James River, not far from Norfolk, and for me to look after you on the trip. There was to be a party of five or six. Is anything wrong?"

"Yes," interrupted Guinevere; "we are not going to Uncle Percival's. That is all a story. We are being taken away to some favorite place of Harold's. It's somewhere in Virginia. Now, Celestine, I want you to promise me when we arrive you will do your best to escape to some place where you can send a message. Please telegraph Chester to get here somehow as soon as he can."

Now, Chester Chestlewick was an old family friend. He was the kind of young man you find eating the formal dinners of the wealthy fashionables of New York. He came of an old family and belonged to most exclusive clubs. He was especially proud of his culture. Though his voice often sounded something like a sob, as though he were choking on his adenoids, he always spoke perfect English, and his beaming smile was sure to lighten the dinner table if he ever had an opportunity to correct anyone. In fact, he had made quite a reputation for himself at Lady Pinfeathers' soiree by correcting a rich brewer who had attempted to pronounce Lord Cholmondeley without leaving off the last dozen syllables.

As Harold had once jokingly remarked, "Chester was a combination of lounge lizard, lapdog and litterateur, with a slight dash of interior decorator, but

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the exact proportion of the ingredients was really difficult to determine."

But, and this was certainly to his credit, he had never himself made a social *faux pas*, even in the complicated society of a great metropolis; and the mothers of Manhattan welcomed him.

Celestine, who was a bright, snappy, up-to-date French maid, wondered why her mistress should want to send such a message to Chester. Then she realized that it might be a case like that of the tramp who was looking for work, and hoping he couldn't find it. So she said nothing, except to tell her mistress that she would forward the message to Mr. Chestlewick as soon as she had the opportunity.

During the morning Guinevere tried to be depressed and unhappy. She knew her father and mother would want her to be so, but she simply could not. The air was too refreshing, the sky too bright and the sea too beautiful.

She dressed herself, went on deck and sat in a comfortable *chaise longue*, putting a rug over her feet. She watched the distant shore that lay like a cloud along the horizon until a school of dolphins nearby caught her attention. She had never seen such fascinating creatures before. They delighted her with their joyous skipping from wave to wave in the glory of the morning. It made her think of the time that Triton blew his wreathed horn, of spirit seas and "magiful" isles, and all the charming creatures of

THE START

imagination of her childhood. She felt herself sailing on the wings of the morning,

*In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold seamajds rise to sun their streaming hair.*

Presently Harold appeared, approaching along the deck. He was dressed in outing flannels. He should have looked gay to be in keeping with all about him, but, instead, he was serious and troubled.

"Guinevere," he said soberly, "I am sorry for what I have done. I acted on the spur of the moment, and perhaps unwisely. Your father told me you had to marry Hyacinth, and I couldn't bear it. So I thought I would defy him once, at any rate, and have you all to myself for several days. I was wrong, and even now we can turn back, and probably get in by tomorrow night."

Suddenly he stopped. "See! See! There is Elcadar, just off to our right!" And he pointed toward the shore, where a silhouette of trees seemed to break the low line of beach that formed the horizon.

Then a surprising thing happened. Guinevere Goldilocks, who was brought up in the strictest private school in New York City, turned to the man at her side and said with a quizzical glance:

"Harold, when did you tell father I would return from the motor trip with Aunt Sophronia?"

"Next Monday," he replied, without comment.

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“Well, today is Wednesday, Harold,” she continued. “We could go to the island, see it for several days and return by Monday. You have put me in such a position now I may be criticised, no matter what happens. So, after all, I might just as well see the island with Celestine for a few of these sunny days.” Then she added a few words from her school training: “But in the future, Harold Fansitarts, and after Monday, you must never speak to me again.”

It was wicked for Guinevere to speak or even think in this way, and Harold himself was surprised. For a moment he thought he would order the captain to turn back, but he failed. The ship was turning gracefully into the channel that led shoreward to Elcadar. He could see the grove of cedars that surrounded the two cosy little bungalows he had built there. Already the magnetism of the island was drawing him from the world of every-day affairs. It was too late to turn back, for a charm held him spellbound. He looked across at Guinevere. She, too, was passing into the borderland of romance. So the Gyrfalcon glided slowly into a little harbor and came to anchor.

Even Celestine, who had come up on deck, had a happy smile on her face. They were all singing as they took the little tender from the big boat to the shore.

Chapter II

MAROONED

BY all the rules of the school books it should have rained or stormed during the ensuing days, but such was not the case. Nature seemed to sanction rather than to thwart the plans of our hero.

As the little party wound its way from the boat landing toward the bungalows, a happy-faced old Southern mammy came waddling down the path to meet them. "Lordy, lordy, lordy, I'se glad to see you, Massa Harold," she gurgled in her rich Southern voice. "We bin waitin' fo' yo' eber so long. We thought yo' war neber comin' back to eat de chickens and de waffles. Lor' lub yo'. I'se glad to see yo' for sure and certain."

"Thank you, Mammy," said Harold. "I certainly am glad to be here once again. This is Guinevere Goldilocks, Mammy. You've heard me speak of her. Now you just make her and Celestine as comfortable as you can in the further bungalow."

With that the old mammy and the ladies turned toward the larger of the two bungalows, and Harold started off for a little walk around the island.

He should have had a guilty conscience. He should have had remorse. But the trouble is he didn't, as George Washington himself would testify.

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

Taking a narrow path that led through the grove of cedars he drew up at the edge of a crescent-shaped pool with sandy shores washed clean and white by the incoming waters of the sea. Here he went in swimming, and in the height of spirits, as he was getting dressed, you could hear him singing:

*To hitch my wagon to a star,
Were better far, were better far!
But I prefer fair Elcadar,
My Isle of Warmth and Beauty.*

*For stars are pale and wan and cold;
They're for the learned and the old.
In youth I rather would enfold
My Isle of Warmth and Beauty.*

*So, tired of wandering on the lea,
As summer sends her call to me,
I point my good ship to the sea,
And there I seek the outer bar
That guides me in to Elcadar.*

When he returned Mammy had luncheon ready, and they all indulged in rare Southern cooking, while the summer wind with noon-day drowsiness swept gently through the bungalow.

Guinevere was very silent. She tried to look cross, too, but did not succeed very well, while Celestine's dark eyes snapped with suppressed merriment.

MAROONED

That afternoon Harold tactfully left the ladies, who were getting sleepy, and went off in a small boat to do some fishing in the bay.

He did not notice Celestine as she stole out of the bungalow to the shore where old Captain Hank Hawkins was waiting for her with the tender from the



"Fan me with a marline spike," exclaimed the Captain

Gyrfalcon. But this was what was taking place. Celestine was bound to deliver the message to Chester, and she had already made Captain Hank her accomplice.

He was a "reg'lar" downeast Yank seadog, and you could "shiver" his "timbers" any time, if he minded in the least trying to assist a saucy little French maid.

"But, Monsieur Capitaine," Celestine was saying, as soon as they were comfortably seated on the Gyrfalcon, "*pourquoi* you not take ze leetle boat ashore?"

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR .

"Scuttle my scuppers, lassie, it's an hour's run at a seven-knot clip nor'east o' here. We nary could get back afore dark. You're a spunky little 'un, though, and if you'll come out early o' the mornin' I'll bust my gallusses if I don't heave you across somehow."

So about daybreak the next morning Captain Hank and Celestine put the sail up in the little tender and headed for the shore seven miles away.

"Fan me with a marline spike," exclaimed the Captain when he saw her address a telegram to Chester Chestlewick. "What in the name of Davy Jones' locker do you suppose that macaroon hunter is goin' to do down here, anyway?" Celestine did not deign to reply. Whereupon respectable old Hank Hawkins, former captain of the famous barkentine Beelzebub, called Celestine a saucy little puss and kissed her. These are the facts, and neither of them was sorry, and neither of them was afraid. It was all in a day's work.

In the meantime, Guinevere, becoming deeply troubled toward afternoon by her maid's absence, called Harold to find out where she had gone. To her surprise Harold did not know, and so they decided to take a tour about the island to discover her if they could.

They walked through groves of cedar and funny little knolls of stunted wind-swept pines. They walked along the shore, picking up shells here and there, and along the tops of the grassy sand dunes that stood

MAROONED

as barriers to the sea. And as they walked, the power that drove the clouds that day in billowy splendor down the summer sky guided their footsteps, attuning them to the harmonies of youth and health and summer.

There was a long promontory toward the sea with a sand dune at its end. As they trudged in silence toward it the world of every-day affairs glided silently back, and left them. At the base of the last dune, the land's end of Elcadar, they were alone with the Great Power working in all things around them. Perhaps they could hear celestial voices that one cannot usually hear because the earth noise intervenes. Harold grew conscious of strange snatches of song that kept running in lyric splendor through his mind.

Afar a sea bird seemed to say, her

*. . voice is like to music heard ere birth,
Some spirit lute touched o'er a spirit sea.*

There was a low murmur in the wind:

And thou art "full of whispers and of shadows."

And then he could hear a voice like his own speaking:

*Thou meanest what the sea has striven to say so long, and
yearned up the cliffs to tell. . . . Oh! all my life has listened
for thy step! . . . This moment is a deep inheriting, and as
the solemn coming to a kingdom.*

Such bursts of music had come to him before, with their strange medley of ideas. How strangely sweet,

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

he thought, the powers in sea and air *pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone*. However, he was silent. He was a wise young man. He knew that silence is our only means of communicating anything really important. And his silence was far-reaching. He took Guinevere, whose eyes were full of glamour, gently into his arms and kissed her, and she kissed him, and twilight came over land and sea, and they were both happy, and neither asked the other foolish questions as to whether that kiss meant they had to go on kissing each other forever, or that neither could ever find anything attractive in any other person, or that the love of man or woman should be greater or less than the love of any one man or one woman, and the many other perplexing questions that have divided the customs of the nations.

They kissed each other simply because it seemed natural, because it seemed symbolic of their environment, because it seemed elevating and inspiring, because it was in harmony with the voices about them, and because they both liked it.

So toward sunset they wandered back to the bungalows, where they were glad to find Celestine, whom they had completely forgotten.

That night, after supper, the moon rose large and luminous out of the sea. Harold and Guinevere sat by a little scrub pine at the edge of the grove where the sand sloped gradually down toward the shore line. Two little cottontails were running here and there in a hollow in the sands not a hundred feet

MAROONED

away. Occasionally a sea bird would give his melancholy cry as he passed over the dunes to his resting place in the marshes. In the distance the waves played their plaintive accompaniment of mystery. They kissed each other good night. And the heart of youth was glad without any artificial pledges, nor even a thought of the morrow; and in this case at least the heart of youth was pure also. For such was the magic of the island.

Chapter III

THE MACAROON HUNTER

GARIBALDI GOLDBLOCKS had just nailed down a copper riveted contract for the sale of a miscellaneous lot of mountain tops on which he figured he had made three million dollars. These mountain tops were to be used as landing and fuel stations for aeroplanes and other air-going monsters. He was a bull-necked, powerful person, possessing that type of meekness that has a tendency to inherit the earth. In this and other respects he was blessed. He was a far-seeing man, and years ago he had made his plans for conquering the conquerors of the air. He had bought the choicest selection of mountain tops for a song in the early days, and now he had just sold them at a mighty profit to the Blimp, Balloon & Aeroplane Company, Ltd., of New York and Paris.

He sat back with an air of satisfaction as he smoked a cigar about the size of a baseball bat, that his dear friend Mr. Court Ennis of the Racquet Club had sent him. They were 1912 crop, virgin leaf, and came in a mahogany box about the size of a coffin. Such are the privileges of the well-to-do.

As the contented smoke wreaths ascended slowly to the ceiling Chester Chestlewick was announced, and soon made his appearance at the door of the

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office. Mr. Goldilocks smiled as he looked at him. Chester was wearing the now famous Cartier jade wrist watch that Lady Pennywait Pinfeathers had given him for curing her favorite Pomeranian of what was really a serious case of the hiccoughs. He was said to have worn a picture of the poor little pet in the back of this watch, but no one really knew.

"Mr. Goldilocks," he began without further ceremony, "Guinevere is in trouble." And he laid the following telegram on the desk:

April 8, 1930.

Chester Chestlewick,
Nimblenut Court,

Park Avenue, New York City.

Come to Hogstown, Virginia. In trouble. Inquire stationmaster.
GUINEVERE.

Old Goldilocks, whose mind was still straying among some of the mountain tops he had just sold, stared at the young man for a few moments. Suddenly he bit off \$1 worth of the end of his cigar, blew it across the room, and said: "If she's in trouble, go to her, Chester. But not a word to Hyacinth! She went on a motor trip somewhere with her Aunt Sophronia. Probably they got stalled."

At this Chester pulled a small box of snuff out of his waistcoat pocket and took a sniff or two (for, gentle reader, though I hate to do it I must tell you that Chester Chestlewick was also a snuff hound, a confirmed sniffer, as it were, in addition to all his

THE MACAROON HUNTER

other habits and accomplishments). He thought it strange that Mr. Goldilocks should have said what he did about Hyacinth. He thought it strange also that Mr. Goldilocks did not offer to go himself. But he said nothing, except: "All right, sir, Guinevere will not find me wanting in her hour of need. I will take the next train."

During the long hours in the train Chester thought of himself as of a knight errant going to rescue his lady in distress. He was fond of Guinevere, proud that she had called upon him in her trouble, and he thought that perhaps his family ties and his culture would weigh in his favor when she was a little older. He did not fear Harold. And little did he know of the hold that Hyacinth had on Mr. Goldilocks.

At ten that night he was put off the train at what the porter said was Hogstown, Virginia. The town consisted, as far as Chester could see, of a platform with a wooden structure at the end about the size of a dog house, and beyond that a pigsty. He knocked on the door of the little building, but there was no answer, save the grunting of pigs in the sty. Each time he knocked the pigs would grunt.

It was not a cheerful situation. There were no lights anywhere. Also the slight drizzle that was now slowly and surely turning into a heavy downpour increased the darkness and the gloom. He stepped out on to the road, hoping that if he followed it a way he might find some dwelling. In a few minutes, however.

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he went over his boots in mud, and so he turned back to what was really the station of Hogstown.

In such a plight I am going to leave Chester Chestlewick, because, gentle reader, I want to tell you confidentially that I consider him, once out of his natural environment of New York City, a very dull and uninteresting person. If you are curious, however, I will let you know that the stationmaster found him the next morning looking like a drowned rat. He sent him back to New York without giving him the information Celestine had furnished. For it was miles through a morass to the nearest boat landing, and he thought the poor boy might die if he attempted to make the trip. Besides, there was no boat.

Often I wonder, in looking back, whether Chester had ever done Celestine an injury. At any rate, Hogstown was not the station he should have gone to, although it was nearby. He should have gone to Frog Hollow, the station beyond.

Chapter IV

PHILOSOPHY

THE day after the walk to land's end with Harold Guinevere became very pensive. She knew in her heart of hearts that her dear old school teacher would never, under any circumstances, have pardoned such conduct. The world was all awry, and she was puzzled. She decided to shun Harold entirely; but this was really unnecessary. For Harold, wise in his day and generation, had gone off deep-sea fishing. He had left at dawn with his men on the Gyrfalcon, and did not expect to return till supper time.

Guinevere had plenty of time for thought, and she had the whole island to herself, without fear of that disturbing creature, man. She told Celestine she was tired, and then slipped quietly out and took the path that led to the crescent-shaped pool.

There, undisturbed, she took off her clothes and dove into the pool. She swam about for a while, and then crept out on the white sand, where the warm sun comforted and caressed her. At first something made her feel that this was wrong. Then she remembered the dolphins, and abandoned herself to the sea and the life-giving sun and air of the island. She felt as though she wanted to absorb as much of the energy

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about her as she could, and even store some up for herself during the stormy days in the city. So she swam and basked and dozed, and passed the hours away till noon.

“My! How purty yo’ look!” Mammy said to her on her return. “Yo’ eyes are just like stars, honey, and yo’ cheeks are like de glow ob de ebenin!” Guinevere could not help blushing with pleasure. In the afternoon she took a long walk to visit again the land’s-end of Elcadar. She could see the Gyrfalcon still far out to sea, but heading in toward the island. She was happy, and yet she was troubled. She knew that it was wrong for Harold to carry her off as he had, and she wondered how any good could come of it. Then she thought of her teacher, an elderly spinster lady who had tacitly taught her that all men are wicked. She thought of her early teaching at Sunday school, and wondered how it all happened that evil came into the world when everything in the beginning was perfectly good.

If evil sprang out of good, was it not possible for good to spring out of evil? Was there not a ray of hope in this thought if what Harold had done was really so evil after all?

She suddenly rose and shook herself. No, she would not indulge in such troublesome thoughts. She would go back to the bungalow. She would make Harold take her back from this wicked and fascinating island, where everything appeared so natural

PHILOSOPHY

there must be something wrong. To be natural was so often to be wicked, according to her early training. She wondered whether her good, kind old school teacher, who was so severe, had ever been kissed by a good-looking young man on an island. She ought *not* to have wondered in such a way. Such a wonder was really wicked [even in the judgment of the author].

In the meantime an interesting conversation was taking place on the Gyrfalcon.

"Captain, are you sure you saw that dark-eyed devil of a maid sending a telegram to Chester Chestlewick?" asked Harold.

"Sure as barnacles on a brig's bottom," growled the old seadog. "Though I ain't supposin' I ought to tell on her as she was carryin' out her orders." Harold understood and nodded.

The Captain continued: "Sir, that ain't worryin' me. That son of a sea cook Chestlewick will nary get here, accordin' to my calkalations. The saucy little puss told him to go to Hogstown, and he can't get across. But, when he gets back to New York he may tell that icicle friend o' yours Hyacinth, and though that feller's a swab, I reckon he ain't no pinhead. The boy's clever; yes, sirree! You may be in for trouble; and you wouldn't hev to knock me down with a feather, either, if I see him come a-sailin' over here in his blimp purty soon."

That evening at supper Harold was very thoughtful. It was true what the Captain had said.

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Hyacinth may have been, what one of the sailors had dubbed him, a "hunderd and twenty-pound bilgewater shrimp," but he was clever. He had had wit



enough to get some secret and powerful hold on Garibaldi Goldilocks. He was also regarded as the best posted man of his time on blimp navigation. He had blimped over many different parts of the country and always with unusual success.

That evening a cloud of depression seemed to settle over the whole party and they all turned in early. Celestine, however, escaped; and if any one had been up they could have seen her and

old Captain Hawkins walking down the beach in the moonlight. The old seadog was explaining that although he might have a few barnacles clinging to him he was still "a purty good sea-faring rig," and "you little puss," he roared at one time so that it frightened some of the sea birds in the marshes: "Here's what! Any time you pipes me over the side I'd navigate a coffin for you across the Dead Sea with a windin' sheet for a sail." At any rate, it was something like this, and there was the sound of laughter in the French language.

Chapter V

THE BLIMP

SURELY enough at dawn the next morning there was a whirring sound in the air. A large gray blimp passed back of the grove, and Hyacinth had arrived. It was the Bucephalus, the winner of the last blimp regatta. Hyacinth was accompanied by a tall, slender Spanish-looking gentleman, with olive skin and black twirling mustachios. It was Varick Varimadildo, and it boded ill for the fair island of Elcadar that he should have ever made a footprint on its sands.

For Varick Varimadildo was nothing but the tool of Hyacinth. It was Varick that did his dirty work; and there was dirty work to be done in managing an estate that had grown from fifty million dollars to one hundred million dollars in a few short years.

Varick was handsome. There was no denying it. His winning smile showed teeth of matchless whiteness, and yet there was something sinister about him. His restless eyes were of bead-like blackness, and he never looked anyone squarely in the face.

The two men made their way to Harold's bungalow and knocked loudly on the door.

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Harold appeared at once in his pajamas and then the trouble began.

Hyacinth stood silent in aloof command. He did not intend to indulge in any vulgar controversy.

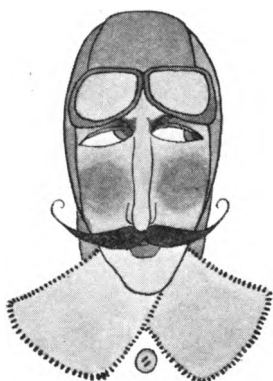
But his tool, Varimadildo, stepped forward with a Colt automatic.

"Harold Fansitarts," he said, pointing his automatic, "you are a kidnapper and an abductor, and I am here by the order of Garibaldi Goldilocks to take you prisoner. The blimp is waiting. You must come."

Harold stepped forward, as if to obey, when suddenly from the sleeve of his pajamas the barrel of another automatic pointed right at Varick. Then a strange thing happened. Varick said: "So!

You are armed! Well, let's throw our arms away and settle matters in some other manner." With this he threw his pistol on the ground and Harold unsuspectingly did the same.

Quick as lightning Varick grasped Harold's arm and thrust a hypodermic needle, that he had concealed on his wrist, into Harold's flesh. Harold sank in a



Varick Varimadildo

THE BLIMP

stupor to the ground. Varick Varimadildo calmly lit a cigarette and said to Hyacinth: "He'll sleep all day. Help me take him to the blimp. Once he's aboard the lugger the girl is yours."

The two men then started to carry him away. It was a distance of several hundred yards. In the meantime the commotion had roused the ladies, and also old Captain Hank Hawkins.

Without being noticed he had slipped back of the bungalows. With a rifle in his hand he stole through the underbrush to the edge of the grove within fifty yards of the Bucephalus. He could see the mechanic starting up the engines, and he decided to act. He took his Winchester and put five bullets into the blimp in rapid succession. He could hear the escaping gas. He knew that his work was done, and then he made his way rapidly back to the Gyrfalcon.

Warning the crew to be ready and arm themselves, he went ashore with the mate, each carrying a Winchester.

The tide was turned. There was nothing for Hyacinth and Varick to do but come to terms. They were euchred. The Captain had the only means of leaving the island.

"Here! You air-lubber!" he yelled at Hyacinth. "Stand still, while matey and I takes a tuck in your jib topsail."

"And now, you Spanish sardine with the shifty eye," he said, turning to Varick, "give me that little

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squirt-gun of yours. I may want to rock you to sleep myself a little later on."

Hyacinth and Varick were then bound with cords and left in the shade of a tree to wait till Harold regained consciousness.

All through this melee Guinevere and Celestine and old Mammy stood shivering with fear, looking out of the window.

Chapter VI

TREACHERY

WHEN Captain Hank stepped forward for the squirt-gun, as he called it, Varick gave him one from his right wrist, but he stealthily kept concealed another hypodermic needle that was bound to his left wrist inside of his cuff. It was a clever trick, for the one he gave the captain was merely filled with a good stimulant, while the one he kept concealed was filled with a most powerful Chinese narcotic. Varick had done most of the collecting for Hyacinth Henry, whose collection of Chinese potteries was considered the finest in New York. In fact, it was while acquiring some of the rarest pieces of the Sting and Stung period that Varick had discovered this wonderful drug. Ling Long Lung, one of the oldest connoisseurs of Shanghai, had revealed its powers to him. Ever after he had carried some of the powerful narcotic with him,

Pretending he was in pain from his cords he called to the Captain to turn him over on his side. The Captain, not wishing to torture the man, went over to him unsuspectingly, when he felt a sharp prick in the back of his leg. He jumped back several feet and then the Chinese narcotic began to work. Slowly he sank to the ground and fell into a heavy stupor.

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Guinevere was looking out of the window and could not understand what was the matter. She saw Harold and the Captain sleeping on the ground and the two men, still securely bound, sitting under the trees. There was something wrong, however.

(And here, gentle reader, I hesitate. I really hate to tell you the facts. I do not know whether they should be put in any book, and yet, as I have pledged myself to tell this tale as it really happened, I am going to continue.)

Varick was groaning. He said he was suffocating, and asked Guinevere to fan him just a moment. She stood above him far enough away so that he could not touch her, as his arms were bound to his sides. But she did not realize the skill and villainy of the man. Fastened under his coat was a rubber sack of a new gas that, by a trick, he had secured from the Gas Defense Service during the late war. It was odorless, and lighter than air, and one sniff was enough to put anyone to sleep for several hours. As Guinevere, actuated by kindness, was trying to fan him, he opened a rubber tube at his side. In a few moments she, too, staggered back and fell asleep upon the ground near Harold.

The mate had gone back to the Gyrfalcon. Old Mammy was squatting in a corner of her kitchen, her eyes rolling with fear. Only Celestine was alive and on the spot to avert what might have been one of the saddest catastrophes since the great war.

TREACHERY

Dragging Harold with all her strength along the path to the swimming pool, she took off his clothes (pardon me once again) and held him in the edge of the water. Then she gave him a mouthful of brandy.

Slowly he awakened. The effects of the drug were wearing off. Celestine told him, as far as she knew, what had happened.

They returned to the others just in time, for Varick had almost wriggled free of his cords. The situation was saved. Harold, weak and listless though he was, had no difficulty in securing himself and his party from further molestation.

Chapter VII

CASTAWAYS

THE next morning at dawn, Harold and the Captain, still suffering from the effects of the Chinese drug, managed to get everything in readiness on the Gyrfalcon. Varick and Hyacinth, securely bound, were locked in separate compartments in the ship's waist. Guinevere and Celestine were comfortably settled in the after stateroom. When all was ship-shape, and the crew were about to heave anchor, Harold went back to say good-bye to the dear old Mammy who had cooked for him and various members of his family ever since he was a boy. It was just like him, and the parting brought tears of affection to the old Mammy's eyes.

(Gentle reader, just note this delicate touch. He really was an awfully nice young man.)

As the Gyrfalcon left the narrow channel and turned northward in the open sea, Harold called Captain Hank into conference. "What had we better do with these two men, Captain?" he asked. "I am not so nervous about Hyacinth, but that fellow Vari-madildo is dangerous, and I have a hunch I ought to be in New York City quite a little while before he gets there."

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

"By the Great Horn Spoon," growled the Captain excitedly, "I'd like to shackle that spaghetti hound and anchor him off a shark reef! However, sir, I think you had better go kind o' smooth-like, to avoid trouble."

So together they planned to dress the two men as common sailors, and leave them without any money at Ladaire. This was a small fishing settlement on a strip of beach that lay just outside of a big salt marsh. There were no telegraphs or telephones there, and it was a long, slow trip through narrow, winding creeks to the nearest settlement on the mainland. The Captain figured it would take the castaways at least three days to get to New York, even if they had plenty of money. "Without the dough-chest," the Captain said with a wink, "I've sort of a suspicion it may take 'em somewhat longer."

The plan was accordingly carried out. The proud possessor of the choicest Chinese jade and the rarest Liberian lap cat in New York City, and the suave Desperate Desmond of our story found themselves actually disguised as common sailors in a ramshackle lot of shanties at the edge of a wind-swept waste.

As the dingy left, old Captain Hawkins could not help calling, as he waved good-bye: "Yo, heave ho, my hearties!" and there was a twinkle in his eye.

Chapter VIII

THE RETURN

ON the way back Harold made up his mind to go directly to Mr. Goldilocks and make a bold front of the whole matter. For Goldilocks, though rough and cold in his manner, was really a big-hearted man. Furthermore, he worshipped his daughter Guinevere; and Harold could never quite understand why the wealthy financier was so insistent on her engagement to Hyacinth. He was soon to learn, however.

The day of the arrival of the Gyrfacon at New York dawned clear and calm. They docked about noon, and immediately after luncheon Harold went to Mr. Goldilocks' office. He told him, without any reservation, the whole story of the trip to Elcadar. Then he asked Mr. Goldilocks to call up Guinevere. Returning from the booth where he had been talking with his daughter, Mr. Goldilocks began:

"Harold, you have done wrong. I have no right to forgive you. But strange circumstances are going to make you my confidant. Years ago there was a girl called Margaret Merton. I was infatuated with her, and foolishly one time I took her to a fishing camp I had in New Brunswick. Well, she married a

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most prominent man here, Tweekenham Twiddle-dale. As you know, he's the strictest of the strict, and about as broad-minded as a gooseberry. There was no harm in our little trip, so help me God, my boy! But it didn't look well.

"About a year ago that parlor snake, Varimadildo, who works for Hyacinth, got wind of the fact from an old guide that we had been on that trip. He became suddenly very attentive to Margaret, and one day in confidence had the nerve to tell her—imagine it!—that I had let the cat out of the bag. Well, the long and the short of it was, she confessed; but there was one curious thing, Harold, about that confession. Margaret told me that she was hardly conscious when she made it, and that shortly after Varimadildo had gone she fell into a kind of stupor that lasted for several hours." At this point Harold interrupted to offer a possible explanation. It was the Chinese drug again administered in some form.

Mr. Goldilocks continued:

"Then Varimadildo turned all this information over to Hyacinth. He is nothing but his jackal, anyway, and Hyacinth threatened to publish the whole story if I did not favor the engagement.

"Well, I didn't care so much about myself, and I think I could have fixed it all right with Mrs. Goldilocks, who has got some sense; but I wanted to protect Margaret Merton. She is a splendid woman. There is no telling what that husband of hers would do if

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the truth came out. Well, boy, I'm paying for my folly, and you may have to pay not only for yours but for some of mine as well, in this pretty mess."

Harold was touched at his confidence. He felt more and more ashamed of what he had done. Then a brilliant idea struck him. Why not work with Mr. Goldilocks to checkmate Hyacinth and Varick, and clear the way for preventing a marriage that could only bring sorrow? He made the proposition to Mr. Goldilocks, and for a few moments they sat together shaking each other's hands. Apparently they had agreed.

Chapter IX

THE TRAIL OF THE COCKTAIL

TWEEKENHAM TWIDDLEDALE was a spare man of about forty, with faultless manners. He had a drab disposition, and his habits of life were unconsciously governed by the old adage: "To avoid unjust criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing." He had received from his ancestors so many corporeal and incorporeal hereditaments, and had seen so much of the world it took a great deal to interest him. In fact, civilization and property had subdued rather than enlivened him. No one ever saw him kiss even his own wife, and he was never known to greet anyone, whether an old friend or member of his family, with the slightest show of joyousness. He seemed to consider any outward expression of emotion bad form.

He was well educated, and really knew a great deal, and yet he seldom spoke. Even if anyone else spoke, he had an annoying habit of looking blankly through his glasses as much as to say: "What of it?" This habit was almost an antidote to any real conversation. If you spoke at all in his presence, you had to speak, but say nothing. Anyone who did happen to express a real thought began to wonder "What of it?" and generally ceased to attempt breaking the monotony with what might otherwise have been an

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enlightening exchange of ideas. The “what-of-it?” face did not asphyxiate into silence exactly, but it accomplished a similar result operating through the media of the optic rather than the pulmonary centers.



He seemed to consider any outward expression
of emotion bad form

Gerry Goodfellow, a college chum of Harold's, put it in this way: “Tweekenham's all right, but he needs a good shot of something like dynamite every day to make him normal.” And Gerry's opinion was important, because Gerry was popularity itself. In college he had been a typical rah! rah! boy, and now that he had graduated he was a regular clubman. Cocktails might come and cocktails might go, but he

THE TRAIL OF THE COCKTAIL

babbled on forever, a veritable river of good cheer. His metier was to mingle, to hum snatches from the latest comic operas and to quote quips from the farces of the hour. He was ruddy of countenance and buoyant of manner. His more intellectual friends liked him because he was restful to the mind, while he cheered the jaded spirit. His less intellectual friends liked him because he made them feel at home. He personified good nature and a slap on the back. Accordingly, he was welcomed in many places, and his judgment of Twiddledale became general.

The red-blooded men of Harold's acquaintance, in thinking of Twiddledale, often wondered about his attractive wife, Margaret. They half expected her to be troubled with chilblains, but she always appeared animated, cheerful and happy. The mysteries of monogamy are manifold.

Imagine trying to get into the confidence of such a man as Twiddledale! Yet this is exactly what Harold had made up his mind to do. Once or twice when there had been a round of cocktails at the club he had noticed a human expression come into Twiddledale's face. It was like a faint fog floating into a vacuum, but it was there. Harold made up his mind on the spot, wrong in principle though his observation and conception may have been, to follow that trail.

It was easier than he expected. Twiddledale appeared at the club on the afternoon of the Yale game. He had won a lot of money and was, with his

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

usual condescension, ordering for his friends. The human expression had not only come into his face, but another expression Harold had never seen there before, an expression of being confidential. It was great luck, and by careful maneuvering he managed to get Twiddleale to take five cocktails in all. Later they went off to dinner together.

They dined at Le Poulet de Printemps, a naughty little cafe that several Fifth Avenue boudoir-sniffers had pronounced quite Bohemian. The atmosphere of the cafe was simply that you could kiss the lady if you could only get her into a taxicab outside. Otherwise, it was like that of any other cafe where the prices are exorbitant, though the food is admittedly good.

They had mallard ducks cooked almost raw. As soon as these were carved, their carcasses were put into a silver duck press and a boy with a large forearm like that of a sailor squeezed the ducks until he obtained about a quart of what was politely called "gravy." This was poured over wild rice and hominy, and everything else that happened to be served with the duck.

As though to follow the example of the old monk who sang, "I would my soul incarnadine with turtle fat and Bordeaux wine," they drank large goblets of burgundy. In fact, it was a scarlet meal; and once again fortune seemed to favor our hero. Just about as the cigars were to be brought, he leaned over in an apparent burst of confidence and told Twiddleale

THE TRAIL OF THE COCKTAIL

(whom he now called Tweekenham without embarrassment), the story of the island, leaving out, of course, the mention of any names. His confession was contagious. Tweekenham suddenly blurted out his own story—the story of his wife's escapade before she was married, and he added: "She confessed to me, old chap. Don't you think that's splendid? I call it courage myself, and I love her all the more for it. In fact, we're better friends than ever. You know, I rather like old Goldilocks."

Harold watched him carefully. "I am glad you told me," he said. Then he explained the whole plot to make old Goldilocks force Guinevere into a marriage that was not of her own choosing. Such was the result of that dinner. Cocktails are bad, it is true; cocktails mixed with burgundy are worse. But some good seemed to have come of them. Such are the inconsistencies of existence.

Also, gentle reader, you may have thought Twiddle-dale was what is somewhat colloquially called a "boob." But he really was not. His circulation was simply subnormal, that is all. We often blame people for things that a mere reading of the blood-pressure will show us are not matters of censure in the least.

Chapter X

AT LAST

IT was not long before Harold told Mr. Goldilocks of Tweekenham's burst of confidence. The old fox of finance was dumfounded. "We business fellows, who happen to be successful, sometimes think we know it all, Harold," he said; "but I guess we do not know so much. Who'd have guessed in a million years that that dignified dandy would have been confidential over a thing like that! It certainly beats the Dutch."

"Perhaps you do him an injustice," was all Harold replied, and started to leave the office.

"Wait a minute," the old man called. "I want to thank you, and I want you to come to dinner tonight, if you can."

"With pleasure," Harold answered, as he closed the door.

That evening in the sumptuous dining-room of Garibaldi Goldilocks, the clouds that had darkened part of a good man's life were rolled away. Mr. and Mrs. Twiddledale, Mr. and Mrs. Goldilocks and Harold made up the whole party. Toward the end of the dinner the table was cleared, and its cover removed. On the bare table of polished mahogany port wine and burgundy were served in old English

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silver goblets, with nuts and fruits of various kinds. It was then self-consciousness ceased, and they all talked without reserve. By ten o'clock on this memorable evening any chances that Hyacinth or Varick had ever had of holding up Mr. Goldilocks were destroyed forever.

On his way home Harold wondered whether burgundy was always a blessing. Twice at least it seemed to have put a roseate hue upon a rather gray world.

It was only a few days later that Hyacinth called upon Mr. Goldilocks at his office. After a little hemming and hawing, he took some pains to explain about the trip of a certain yacht to an island off the coast of Virginia. He was astonished to find Mr. Goldilocks taking the extraordinary tale as a matter of course. Then he politely mentioned that he would like to have his marriage to Guinevere take place the following month. Again he was astonished when Mr. Goldilocks, apparently assenting, handed him his hat and coat, and said good-bye graciously to him at the door.

About an hour after Hyacinth's departure Varick Varimadildo made his appearance. Goldilocks had been expecting him. He had stationed a man behind a screen at the end of the office. This screen had always stood there, and was used to conceal a desk and typewriter.

Varick was somewhat vague at first about his mission. Gradually, however, as Mr. Goldilocks drew him out, he told his whole story. It was simply that

AT LAST

unless Mr. Goldilocks would sell out his Star Spangled Mining stock, Varick would see that the whole New Brunswick camp episode was published.

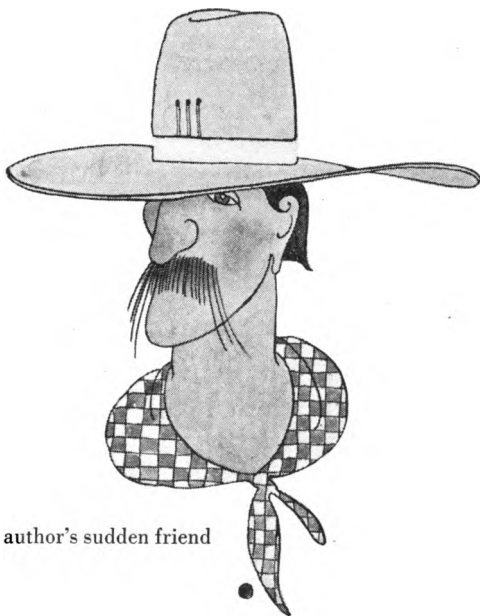
"Is that all?" asked Mr. Goldilocks; and detective Dietrich Delatour appeared from behind the screen. He held Varick until another officer appeared and arrested him for attempted blackmail. The papers had all been prepared, and Varick did not even have a chance to communicate with Hyacinth before being placed in custody.

It was only a week later that a large headline appeared in the papers to the effect that the Star Spangled Mining Company, Hyacinth's favorite and most successful enterprise, had passed into the control of Garibaldi Goldilocks, whom the papers all described as one of the most astute manipulators of modern times. After years of waiting, as soon as Hyacinth's hold had been weakened, Mr. Goldilocks had had his revenge. He had caught Hyacinth short of the market and taken away the pride of his possessions.

Chapter XI

AS IT WERE

THE coast is cleared. I am quite relieved. Also Alkali Ike has just called on me in the midst of my story. He is an old friend of mine. I met him years



The author's sudden friend

ago in Hunger Gulch Gap far away in Wyoming. He has a breezy manner and the most picturesque way of telling the truth. I am proud to let you know

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that Alkali really likes Harold. He has just said: "That boy could rope an antelope in a dust-storm even if he happened to be ridin' a blind mule."

So, regardless of what you may think of the ethics of the case (I find myself quoting Alkali again), Harold Fansitarts "is sure goin' to merry that gal." [Gentle reader, we simply cannot help this denouement, although it has been painfully obvious all along. It is the way of the modern novel; and please remember this is not a detective story.]

We are also going to follow Harold on another yachting trip. It is so much better fun at sea and exploring around islands than in the city of New York. Furthermore, we are going again to Elcadar. It has such a pleasant sound, and is so comfortably situated off the coast of Virginia.

The comedy of this trip, however, must not be missed. Harold has actually become engaged to Guinevere, and it has made him shy. He had no compunction whatever about carrying her off on the first trip, but now he hesitates. Celestine can hardly serve as chaperon now, especially on account of her conduct with the Captain. So Chester Chestlewick and Gerry Goodfellow are going to accompany them.

As to Chester, you must remember that he had suffered a terrible tribulation in Hogstown, and his fondest hopes had been blasted by Guinevere's engagement. Pity may have prompted Harold to ask him. But there is another consideration. Harold

AS IT WERE

had also asked Chester to take along the little Pomeranian that he had once so skilfully cured of the hiccoughs. The poor little thing had been under the weather, and Chester himself had suggested that "a frolic amid grassy dunes" might restore its vigor.

Lady Pennywait Pinfeathers had approved of the plan. So the party of four and the Pomeranian were scheduled to sail. Possibly Harold may have had another motive for taking Chester and the dog on the trip. He may have wanted to remind Guinevere of the sadness of what might have been. It is difficult to tell. For, as the philosophers aver, "man's mind is unknowable."

One thing is certain, however. Gerry Goodfellow had been asked simply because he was properly named when he was born.

Chapter XII

SOUTHWARD-BOUND

IT was somewhere off the coast of Jersey. The Gyrfalcons were speeding southward in the freshness of the morning. The fair Atlantic sparkled in the sunlight. It was early in May, and nature seemed to be trying to atone for the harshness of the winter.

Chester was in the bow giving the Pomeranian its morning bath.

Gerry was sprawled out on deck singing his latest hit from the stage, "Who Ate Nut Sundaes with Friday and Crusoe on Saturday Night?"

Harold and Guinevere were in the stern reclining in two wicker chairs drawn closely side by side. Harold was in ordinary tennis costume, white flannels and soft shirt, while Guinevere looked comfortable in her short poplin skirt, and her white blouse of simple voile. An awning kept off the glare of the sun and a steamer rug kept out the chill of the wind.

Under such circumstance, do you wonder that these two, drifting so gently on the tide of youth into the hazy realms of romance, should seek to discover their lodestar, and so understand the mysterious forces of their destiny?

Guinevere wondered why Harold wanted to marry her. At least she hinted the question in various feminine ways.

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"It's a long story," Harold said, as he rested his arm on the back of her chair and looked over the summer sea. "But, as it's so comfortable here and we have so many miles to go I may tell you some of it.

"When I was twelve years old I was taken to a place in New Hampshire for the summer. Our house was beside a beautiful lake that had a little island in the center. Rising above us was a long hill, with a big pine at its summit that towered above all the other trees. There one summer afternoon I met a little girl. She captivated my imagination. In the evenings, when the last rays of sunlight were on the pine at the top of the hill, we used to go up and sit under it. In the daytime we used to row to the island and play it was all ours.

"Ever since that trip to New Hampshire, woman has been to me the bearer of the beautiful, and islands have haunted me with their charm. Even the pine retains its influence. To me woman is the world, and I hope she always will be.

*I was born of her,
Bred of her,
Nurtured and fed of her,
Then I was wed of her—
Star of my life.*

He was quoting from one of his own poems. He wanted her to understand that woman to him was a messenger from some divine source. It was woman

SOUTHWARD-BOUND

that made or marred the sunset or the dawn; it was woman that made wondrous that first breath of Spring that comes floating over the meadows from the south. For him the wistfulness of the west wind in Spring was merely one of the wonders of woman.

Guinevere listened somewhat nonplussed. She was piqued. The theory was too abstract. She said nothing, however, while Harold continued:

"Elcadar, itself, is beautiful to me only as seen through the eyes of woman. Without woman it would be as dust and ashes. And that, dear, is why I am taking you there again. I want to see it all with you, and to see it all through your eyes. And I want you to see it through mine, just a little, too, if you can."

This was better, and Guinevere smiled. In affairs of the heart a practical application of a theory is almost always more gratifying than the theory itself. Just at this juncture Gerry and Chester came aft and joined them. It was not long before a close harmony floated out on the summer wind. Four people were singing, for they had tossed their cares aside, and were hastening to the land of indolent delight. It was a day of contentment without a note of discord. Yes, there was one; I forgot it for a moment. When the linked sweetness of some of that close harmony grew too long-drawn out, the little Pomeranian got up and howled in protest. And the little Pomeranian's ear for music was really not good, carefully educated though it had been by Lady Pennywait Pinfeathers.

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At sundown the Gyrfalcon arrived at Elcadar. At ten that night our party were all asleep, comfortably settled in the bungalows that Mammy had made ready for them.

The stars shed their soft splendor, the sea crooned its ancient legends and the magical night held the world in a charmed silence.

Chapter XIII

STARDUST

HAROLD was alone on the beach. Reclining on his elbow with his chin resting in his hand, he watched the breakers tumble shoreward in the lazy afternoon. He had been casting for several hours in the surf for channel bass, and a rest in the warm sun was what he needed. He sang to himself, and there was a note of reminiscence in his voice:

*For stars are pale and wan and cold,
They're for the learned and the old.
In youth I rather would enfold
My Isle of Warmth and Beauty.*

After sunset, however, that evening a gradual and subtle change came over him. He wondered whether he was getting old. He was walking with Guinevere in the summer night, while *silently one by one in the infinite meadows of Heaven blossomed the lovely stars*. Their soft splendor settled into his heart. The waves whispered:

*She walks in beauty like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies.*

The day had been hot, the night was cool. The day had been restless with action, the night was quiet

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

and full of peace. Throughout the day the glare of the sun had made the long stretches of beach shimmer in the heat. Tonight the eye could open wide and gaze into that wonderworld of space that knows no limit and lies forever beyond our little understanding. Once again, as in the charmed hour of twilight on their first visit to the island, the earth noise ceased to intervene.

The voices of the gods and of departed poets hovered like spirits in the air about them. A choir invisible was singing, and the burden of the song was this: Life secures you in its coil of every-day affairs, but the dreams of romance that were yours in youth can never die. Somewhere over the rim of the world lies romance and every human heart must yearn to find it. Otherwise life loses its savor and its song.

He raised his eyes to see the spirits of the upper air, and there on high the *orbed maiden with white fires laden that mortals call the moon*, was drifting disk-like through films of fleecy cloud. Truly the goddess of the night trailed mysterious influences through the corridors of the world.

No longer the stars appeared "pale and wan and cold." They were serene in their glory, happy in their sublimity.

Harold led Guinevere to a little cup-shaped knoll in the sands. As they walked toward it they were airy spirits no longer conscious of the touch of earth at their feet.

STARDUST

Once seated in the sands, Harold folded her closely to him, and her hair blew across his face as she rested her head in the bend of his arm. He told her of the blessed damozel that leaned out from the gold bar of Heaven. He sang to her "songs of Araby and tales of fair Cashmere," and other snatches from the storehouse of memory. He ended with the refrain of a little song of his own:

*For out on high in the starlit sky
The trailing night winds blow;
Their garments sweep
Through the halls of sleep,
Till the head on the arm sinks low, my love,
Till the head on the arm sinks low.*

Guinevere slept. And in that sleep induced by perfect trust, the warmth of human companionship and the dim imaginings born of the night, there came to her the treasure of the humble, that strange treasure, the rarest and most common treasure in the world. It is the treasure of human love, something that is born of stardust, yet must always touch the earth to retain its power, a treasure that is common to us all, yet so rare that many seek and few find it, or of those that find it, few keep the light of its healing power undimmed.

Chapter XIV

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

THE excitement is over. The interest wanes. Marriage has cast its cooling shadow over the more restless realms of romance like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Our hero and our heroine have been married for more than the fatal period of seven years. They have had their ups and down, of course, like all human beings. But the graphic variations from the line in the chart of their existence, that we may call the even tenor of their way, have grown less with the years. They are dwelling now in peace and harmony in the city of New York, where some wag has told us there are but two classes of people—the quick and the dead.

What is left for a novelist of virtue to tell? In novel-land, as in the city of New York, there are but two classes of people—the married and the unmarried. They are the quick and the dead of this amusing land. Marriage stuns the novelist of virtue. His imagination ceases. It is only the wicked novelist who makes his married characters indulge in unorthodox moods that can carry the interest further.

Happy healthy married people have lost the ferment of unrest that stirs the poet to sing and the artist to put his soul on canvas. The divine unrest so greatly

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

idealized by the world is but tintured with its sins after all.

*The half of music, I have heard men say,
Is to have grieved.*

We suffer in order to sing. And suffering ever seems to be associated with sin while both, according to history, are associated with the mystery of sex. Here is an enigma of civilization. Here is something that even the three wise men of the east could never understand.

As a virtuous author, therefore, I can only give a glimpse into the infinitude of peace that had settled over the home of Harold and Guinevere. Much as I may disappoint you, I cannot whisper to you any scandal about any of its inmates. Even the Swedish servants were paragons of propriety.

Harold and Guinevere were blessed with three children. The oldest was a boy seven years old. The others were girls, nice, normal little girls. The boy was unusual, however. He was full of mischief, good-looking and very much alive. Oh! portents of evil and worry for his mother in later years. In other words, he was the typical naughty boy that everybody loves. His father nicknamed him Nessmuk, because he wanted to be a hunter when he grew up.

One day Nessmuk came to his father and said:

“Dad, I wish you would tell me a story. The books mother gives me are all right, but I want something new. I’m tired of little Rollo and the fairy books, and

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

I don't even like the Katzenjammer Kids any more. You know I can lick all the boys my size in school."

His eyes twinkled, as though, at the age of seven, he appreciated the humor of his own attitude, and the charming disconnectedness of his ideas. So the fond father told the son a story that tried hard to live up to its title, *Stilton Cheese, the Detective; or, Mouse Hunting in Mongolia*. It was the kind of a story that appeals to the tired business child of New York. At any rate, it was unusual and pleased Nessmuk very much. It was only a few evenings later, however, when he wanted another story. This time mother was sitting nearby, knitting. She nodded good-natured disapproval as the following tale was told to enlighten the mind of youth:

The Downside Ups of Little Upside Downkins

Twice upon a time, long, long ago, there was a topsy-turvy lad called Upside Downkins. He was the only boy in his bailiwick that was quick enough to crawl into a hole and pull the hole in after him.

Because of this extraordinary, as well as extemporaneous and amiable attribute, his teacher came to him one day and asked him to go a-hunting for the Snig Fish.

Now the Snig Fish was a curious fish that could swim so fast that it made the water boil, and he would disappear from the hunter in a cloud of steam. The only way to catch this wonderful fish was to hang with your head down out of a balloon

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over the water, and catch him by the tail as he rose in the cloud of steam.

But this was easy for Little Upside Downkins, because he was born in a Blimp in a whirlwind at an elevation of 3000 feet, and could stand on his head for hours.

Well, one day, when it was calm, he was sailing head down with his balloon over the water when a Snig Fish started to swim.

Lo and behold, the water began to boil, a cloud of steam arose and the Snig Fish started to disappear, when what do you suppose happened? Why, Little Upside Downkins tweaked him by the tail with a pair of tweezers and held him head downward in the rising cloud of steam. Slowly and surely the Snig Fish sneezed himself to death without injury to his beautiful skin, and lay a limp and perfect specimen in the balmy summer air.

His teacher said: "Upside," for he called him by his first name, "I commend your ability, your agility, your dexterity, your temerity and your tranquillity, and I am going to present you with the Distinguished Order of the Pomeranian Plum Hounds."

Whereupon he pinned upon the palpitating bosom of Little Upside Downkins an undersized summer squash that was not too ripe, nor yet too raw.

Such was the capture of the Snig Fish by Little Upside Downkins in the good old days of long ago, before even "monkeys chewed tobacco and little birds nested in old men's beards," and ducks went quack, quack, quacko.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

This proved to be Nessmuk's favorite story. It became a classic in the household. It enjoyed the distinction of not being in any of the nursery books that belonged to outside children.

Further into the infinitude of peace I do not think it necessary or wise to lead you. The domestic scene just outlined will serve as a symbol of all the others. But you will probably want to know about some of those who are still navigating the seas of unrest, and who, up to this time, have neither died nor married.

Chapter XV

ADIOS

CAPTAIN HAWKINS AND ALKALI IKE

EXEUNT Nos. 1 AND 2. ~~Acc~~ As for Hank and Al (please note that I know them so well now I call them by their first names) we need have no nervous worries.

Hank was wedded to the sea long ago, and the sea is an excellent wife. At any rate, those that go down to her in ships are usually hearty souls and of good cheer. Possibly they take their married life with a little salt and this lends to it a savor.

Al, of course, has always been wedded to the desert and the stars. Moonlight nights on the trail in Wyoming had engraved on the tablets of his spirit an image that could never be supplanted by that of another. He was destined to carry out the traditions of history. According to the records of the past, so far as I have been able to discover, the name of Alkali Ike has never adorned a marriage register.

*The pastor murmured:
"Two and two makes one,"
And slipped a sixteen K
On Mamie's grab.*

No chant of this kind has ever enslaved anyone named Alkali Ike. He could never be encumbered by

THE ISLAND OF ELCADAR

a ceremony. He is a creature of the free and open country, and the heavens undoubtedly approve. The stars wink their eyes in mischievous delight when Alkali hits the trail.

VARICK AND GERRY

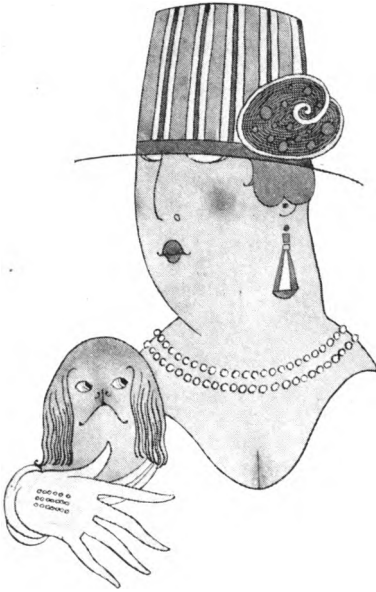
Exeunt Nos. 3 and 4. ~~3~~ After being checkmated in his plot against Mr. Goldilocks, our villain, Varick, was short of funds, and virtually had to become a movie actor. As fitting and appropriate in the part of movie star, he became married so many times that we may regard any particular instances as mere incidents. It would be trivial to record them. To him a marriage ceremony was merely another scene in the movie of life. He was a success, however, especially as the villain. His sly look and dark twirling mustachios appealed to the people. Furthermore, they were amused by his multitudinous marriages.

There is a saying that the good die young. So it was with Gerry Goodfellow who can no longer cheer us. Shortly after his trip on the Gyrfalcons he was killed on Fifth Avenue. He had just called on Lady Pennywait Pinfeathers at her stately mansion. They were standing on the corner together when her Pomeranian escaped. Gerry did his best to rescue it, rushing quickly into the crowded traffic, where he was struck and instantly killed by a large Rolls-Royce.

Lady Pinfeathers was greatly shocked at the accident. She fainted from excitement. When she recovered consciousness, however, and learned that the

ADIOS

Pomeranian was saved she wept tears of gratitude, reflecting to herself that the dispensations of the Lord are wonderful.



Lady Pennywait Pinfeathers

HYACINTH

Exit No. 5. ~~M~~ After Guinevere's marriage, Hyacinth began to droop like a lily upon the stalk. He grew more and more falsetto. He had acquired the habit of promenading on Fifth Avenue in the afternoons with something on a leash that fashion called a

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dog. It was a little animal about the size of a weasel, and it was very white and very fluffy. To the uninitiated it looked very much like a walking powder puff.

There is no telling what might have become of Hyacinth if he had not met Apantha Primrose and come under her influence. She was a married woman of romantic disposition and Bohemian habits. She was

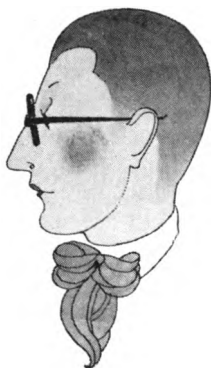


She did not get along with her husband because he had no
raven locks drawn back over a brow of alabaster

ADIOS

a writer of *vers libre*. She did not get along with her husband because he had no raven locks drawn back over a brow of alabaster, and he ate his meals at regular hours. He had no abandon, no *joie de vivre*, no artistic side.

She was looking for a comrade in Bohemia when she happened to meet Hyacinth. This flower, she thought, must not be one of those that are born to blush in the dark. His beautiful soul must be revealed. Accordingly, Hyacinth was lured into the Primrose studio where no pictures more normal than the cover designs of "Vanity Fair" were ever allowed to appear. Here where Apantha yearned toward the ideal, he became saturated with modern art. She taught him the abandon of art and the doctrine of individuality; also the smell of musk. He ended up by becoming an interior decorator of the most advanced type. He could speak of choice bits, and say "Perfectly Charming" with a tone and accent that hypnotized the fashionables. His color schemes were never so vulgar as to resemble anything in nature. His prurient purples, livid greens and pale yellows spelt modernity in art. Many a buff-and-banana-colored boudoir testified to his ability.



Many a buff-and-banana-colored boudoir testified to his ability

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CELESTINE

Exit No. 6. ♫ On the other hand, Celestine, so blithe and full of the joy of life, became infatuated with Shernard Boer, a worldly gentleman whose critical faculty was only surpassed by his cynicism. He would have made the world angry but for his sense of humor.

There was enough originality in what he said to interest the intellectuals, and enough truth to appeal to the *hoi polloi*.

In talking with a college professor he would indulge in some such philosophy as this:

“After all, professor, civilization is but a process of debilitation softening us so that we will fit into a conventional mould; it is an elaborate scheme for the production of human duplicates; in fact, chemically speaking, it is but a solvent of individuality or personality into the common fluid of society. I sincerely hope we are not overdoing it. Some of my artist friends fear we are destroying the charm of the individual.”

In talking with a business man his comment on Garibaldi Goldilocks is illuminating:

“You know Garibaldi has executive ability. Executive ability is merely the acumen to get some other fellow to do all the work, convince him you are doing it yourself, and get all the credit for it yourself. In this regard Garibaldi has few peers. I really believe his private secretary does most of the work, yet

ADIOS

Garibaldi says his private secretary is merely a young man he employs to conceal his private papers."

On the really important subjects of life, however, which we have to discuss with the ladies, Shernard was mysterious and baffling.

To him marriage was merely a method of separating two people who might otherwise have been perfectly compatible. He argued that eminent divines married people really to separate them just as we give a big cigar to the little boy to cure him of smoking. It was a very exasperating argument because it was so hard to answer. He did not believe marriage was popular, but if it was, he agreed with an early predecessor that it was popular only insofar as it combined the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity. His description of platonic love had been a *bon mot* with the smart set. He referred to it as that which is possible only between husband and wife.

When some of his friends called him a cynic he simply smiled and said: "A cynic is merely one who sees the truth and regrets it. Such being the case, I admit that I am one. You need not bother to prove it."

But this was merely his way. He confided in Celestine: "You know, I often play the cynic when really the world is a wonderful place to live in. Few people, in my judgment, are vicious. I wrote some lines on this subject once which I called, "The Average Sinner."

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*When Love is dead
The ceaseless mourners of life's caravan
Like shadows pass
Across the desert of the soul;
And since, alas!
Within this broken heart of mine
There is no song,
I seek that hopeless anodyne
Of doing wrong.*

“Most people that do wrong do so, not because they fail to realize that the treasure of the humble is the greatest treasure in the world, but because they have missed that treasure. They try to comfort themselves with some other sorrowful substitute.”

It was not many days later, however, that he remarked in his most whimsical vein:

“Celestine, you attract me because you are not hampered with a troublesome conscience. I was born in New England, and when I was young I found a skeleton in our closet—a New England conscience. The years have taught me that a New England conscience does not really prevent us from doing anything, it only prevents us from enjoying it afterward. Now, Celestine, you always appear joyous over your recollections. So you fascinate and cheer me. You have charm. Charm, you know, is but the ability to get away with it, even though it may be against the rules. You undoubtedly have that capacity.”

All this may have been a doubtful compliment, but it pleased Celestine. Shernard was not like other men.

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He was different and *difficile*, and this simply made the coquette in her all the more keen to conquer him.

Shernard, though of the world, seldom drank. He explained it in this way:

"Alcohol is merely a poison we take in small doses to drug ourselves against our own lack of imagination and the boredom of some of our most intimate acquaintances. When I am well I do not drink, because my imagination is generally very playful. You will notice, also, Celestine, that when I am with you I drink very little.

"Some wag has said that bachelors like me hesitate to embark upon the ocean of matrimony, not because of the fear of shipwreck, but because of the horror of becoming becalmed.

"Others have said the marriage chain is so heavy it often takes more than two to carry it. I am quite certain that I will have no such fears if you dare risk the experiment with me. Somehow I feel the wine of life will be sufficient for me and there will be no tendency to indulge in other stimulants. I was amused the other day at a friend of mine who described a clubman as a sort of fish about halfway between a Yarmouth bloater and a pickled herring. I will certainly do my best not to become one of these, unless you treat me very badly, and you must try and treat me well, Celestine, because the art of making love is not nearly as difficult as the art of making a good husband. The first is simple and quite instinctive, while the second is complex and

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requires much training. And the worst of it all is nowadays that so many husbands are either overtrained or not in training at all. Apparently there are many who have the idea love is a trap. One can fall in, but cannot fall out. They make no effort. According to them, marriage is a mirror that reflects only the faults of the other fellow. Possibly this accounts for our modern situation."

There was a strange humor in this cynic. He continued:

"I am more poetic when my head is clear, and I can appreciate the dawn. Of course, poetry has its faults, and possibly it is wrong to be too well. According to our modern morals a poet is generally a very wicked person, because he has the capacity of being sincerely in love with more than one person at the same time. A lady who is in love with a poet often has to decide whether she prefers a half of a whole man to the whole of half a man. It is not an easy problem to decide."

Celestine, however, had decided. In May they were married. Furthermore, the marriage proved to be a happy one. The worldliness of our cynic gave him understanding, and the zephyr-like quality of Celestine kept the ship from becoming becalmed.

CHESTER CHESTLEWICK

Exit No. 7.  Chester Chestlewick is our surprise. It happened in this way: Alkali Ike had conceived the idea of taking him out west. To him Chester was a

rare specimen. He would prove a great treat to the boys of Hunger Gulch Gap. Alkali almost laughed out loud when he imagined one of his pals roping the poor lad or stacking him up against a bucking broncho.

But the unexpected happened. It was another case of unto the third and fourth generation. The strong attributes of some Chestlewick ancestor came out in Chester under the influence of Western life. The desert and the stars removed all the *pâté de foie-gras* from his soul. In a short time he could whip out a Colt automatic, rope a steer, or even wear a red bandanna as well as any of the roaring boys of the gulch. In the end he gained quite a reputation as a hunter specializing on mountain lions. He caught a couple of wildcats, which he trained with a skill unknown hitherto even in the West. They followed him everywhere into the wilderness, and were as gentle as kittens with him when he fed them a slab of raw deer meat after the hunt. Strangers, however, had to beware.

Furthermore, he outstripped all the other cowboys in winning the regard of "Little Sal," the daughter of Old Buck Stickleback, who, next to Alkali, had more notches to his gun than any man in the county. Little Sal was the pride of the Gap. She was petite like an antelope, but she had the courage of a grizzly. There was not a cowboy in the neighborhood who would not have laid down his life for her. She could ride anything, always rode at breakneck speed, and always had her hair blowing out behind her in the breeze. She

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could draw a gun as quick as any of the bad men in the town. The working partnership of Chester and Little Sal came about in this way.

Snake Dawson, of the Porcupine River country, and Slime Dulap, of Skunk Hollow, had sworn to do Old Buck Stickleback, who had rounded them both up on



Chester in the East

one occasion. They planned to kidnap Little Sal and hold her for a ransom. They were going to get even with Old Buck and make a little money besides. They were about as venomous and slippery a couple of bandits as ever misbranded a steer, and they blew into the Gap one afternoon in a bad frame of mind.

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Old Buck had had his eye on them. When he met Chester he said: "Those boys are bad. They're full of the old Deacon's red-eye, and it's strong enough to make a pollywog spit in a pickerel's eye." All this made Chester suspicious, and he decided to keep his ear to the ground.



Chester in the West

One day he was off on one of his trips hunting mountain lions. He had sent the trained wildcats ahead to mew and decoy the lions. Suddenly he noticed the hoofprints of two horses. Out of curiosity he followed them, discovering that Snake and Slime were camping together in the wilderness. He tethered his horse and

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waited till nightfall, creeping up in the dark near their campfire. He could hear them talking, and it was not long before he knew the details of the kidnapping plot.

About a week later, at the appointed time, two riders, covered with dust, drew up at the Stickleback ranch-house. Old Buck was away, but Little Sal came out on the porch. They threw a lariat over her and started to pack her on one of the horses. They did not notice an arm slowly protruding over the edge of the veranda. It was Chester, who had kept a faithful watch for many days. With the accuracy of Deadshot Dick of history, he first took off Snake's right thumb and then Slime's trigger finger. They could neither draw nor hold a lariat. In the excitement, however, the lariat became caught by Snake's foot as he started to run, and threw Sal violently against one of the veranda posts. She fell stunned to the ground.

Now, Sal was the kind of girl that would have drawn a gun on a man in a minute if he even *tried* to kiss her. She had ridden so much and was so hardened with Western life you practically had to kill her to get her to yield in the slightest to any masculine influence. Chester was fortunate. Circumstances had happily prepared all the necessary preliminaries.

As he was carrying her from the porch into the house he kissed her, believing her unconscious. Her eyes opened slowly just at this moment. The harshness of the desert disappeared. A series of volts entered her tiny system, and the rigor and philosophy of Little Sal,

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the pride of the Gap and the only daughter of Old Buck Stickleback, were changed forevermore.

Where she would have shot him if had taken such a liberty with her before, she would have shot him now if he had transferred that liberty to anyone else. In other words, the gentle rains of emotion had fallen upon the desert of her rigorous soul, and the blossom of love was appearing above the sands. It grew into a splendid plant, lifting its head in beauty in that Western land. Early the following spring, just as the long slopes of the hills were donning their mantle of green, there was the sound of merrymaking in the valley. Alkali Ike and the other boys of the arroyo were celebrating to make the wedding of Chester and Sal a never-to-be-forgotten event. Church bells and laughter, gunshots and shouts let the countryside know that spring had at last come.

In later years about the little ranch in Hunger Gulch Gap there were children playing, and the music of their laughter was as the murmur of waters in a peaceful valley. For East and West had mingled in harmony. The treasure of the humble was theirs.

The moaning of the litany in their country church, and the text chosen from the Fifty-first Psalm of David:

*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity,
And in sin did my mother conceive me*

did not depress them. They felt that they could smile at the little clergyman and his flock of "miserable sinners."

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And their happy attitude passed on to the next generation. For their oldest child, whom starry nights on the desert had filled with poetic longings, sang softly to herself as she walked home through the fields after the sermon:

*Behold, I was shapen in glory,
And in beauty did my mother conceive me.
The stars sang at my birth,
And now the world is full of wonder and of joy.*

As she sang she lifted up her eyes to the hills. Her face was radiant with beauty.

It was as though Pippa were passing.

L'ENVOI

*Tears, idle tears, I wonder what they mean?
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart and gather to the eyes
In looking on the happy autumn fields
And thinking of the days that are no more.*

AS I look back over the land I have traveled during my illness, tears gather to my eyes. It is hard to say good-bye. Perhaps, as the poet says, we are such stuff as dreams are made on. The coil of circumstance is tightening round me. The earth noise begins to intervene. It grows more insistent and drowns the voices of the spirits that haunt my lovely Island of Elcadar. Now my days are involved with debits and credits, arguments and disputations, the distracting humdrum of every-day affairs.

Only occasional dreams are left, but in them, happily, I can hear the choir invisible singing, as it sang to Harold on the Island of Elcadar:

“Life secures you in its coil of every-day affairs, but the dreams of romance that were yours in youth can never die. Somewhere, over the rim of the world, lies romance, and every human heart must yearn to find it. Otherwise, life loses its savor and its song.”

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